

## **Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Reporting for 2006-2007 Frequently Asked Questions**

### **I. Early Childhood Outcomes Areas & Summary Ratings**

#### **1. Why are we reporting on three outcome areas rather than on the five developmental domains?**

The federal Office for Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires that we report on the three outcome areas. The outcomes were chosen based on stakeholder input and recommendations by the ECO Center. Many stakeholders expressed concern that using an approach that separates children's development into discrete domains is not consistent with the integrated nature of how young children develop and goes against integrated and interdisciplinary intervention models. Additionally, since the emphasis in working with young children with disabilities is on developing functional skills, the three child outcomes are critical functional outcomes young children need to be successful in every day activities and routines. These outcomes incorporate but also integrate developmental domains.

#### **2. What are the three outcome areas?**

##### **Outcome 1 – Positive Socio-Emotional Skills**

This area involves the child's level of functioning when relating to adults and relating to other children. It includes the child's skills in: expressing emotions and feelings, engaging in social interactions and play, learning rules and expectations, and establishing attachment/separation/autonomy.

##### **Outcome 2 – Acquiring and Using Knowledge and Skills**

This area involves the child's level of functioning related to thinking, problem solving, using symbols and language, reasoning, remembering, and understanding the physical and social worlds. It includes the child's skills in: receptive/expressive language and communication, early concepts (e.g., classification, spatial relations, and symbols), imitation, and for very young children, object permanence.

##### **Outcome 3 – Taking Appropriate Action to Meet Needs**

This area involves the child's level of functioning as it pertains to taking care of his or her basic needs, getting from place to place, using tools, and contributing to his or her own health and safety. This outcome includes: integrating motor skills to complete tasks, using self-help skills, and acting on the world to get what one wants.

#### **3. What is the ECO Summary Scale?**

The ECO Summary Scale is a 7-point scale used to capture a child's current level of functioning across a variety of settings and situations that make up his/her day; the ratings are in terms of how the child's functioning compares to typically developing children of the same age. Rating decisions should convey the child's usual functioning across typical settings, not his/her capacity to function under ideal circumstances. Briefly, the ratings are as follows:

7 – **Completely:** The child demonstrates behaviors and skills considered typical for his/her age. There are no concerns about delays.

6 – Between 7 & 5: There are some concerns which should be monitored.

5 – **Somewhat:** The child's behaviors and skills tend to be scattered; at some times and/or in some situations, the child's behaviors are age appropriate. The child's level of functioning is characteristic of a slightly younger child. Sometimes, adult assistance may be required.

4 – Between Somewhat & Emerging

3 – **Emerging:** The child does not yet demonstrate behaviors and skills expected of a child his/her age in any situation. However, the child can build age-expected skills. The child's functioning is more like that of a younger child.

2 – Between Emerging & Not Yet

1 – **Not Yet:** The child does not yet demonstrate age-expected behaviors and skills; the child also does not demonstrate the immediate foundational skills upon which to build age-expected skills. The child's functioning is like that of a much younger child. The child requires adult assistance most to all of the time.

**4. As the EEE coordinator/teacher, can I determine each child's summary ratings by myself?**

No, a team-wide effort should be used to assign ratings for each outcome area. Your team can seize this opportunity for quality discussion. Summary ratings should be based on various **types of evidence** (assessments, observations, interviews, anecdotal notes, etc) and **sources of evidence** (parents, preschool teachers, caregivers, related service providers, and others). As you know, the 7-point rating scale is very subjective; therefore, determining ratings for each child in each outcome area may differ greatly among team members. Each team member's unique perspective is equally important and should be consensus. Hopefully the phrase, "We're all on the same page!" will be heard and reiterated throughout Vermont.

**5. How should we rate a child who uses hearing aids? Do we consider the child's functioning with or without the hearing aids?**

Ratings of children who require assistive technologies or special accommodations should reflect the child's level of functioning using whatever assistive technology or special accommodations are present over a variety of settings (preschool, home, childcare). However, if assistive/accommodations devices are not used consistently across settings, then the child's functioning should be rated accordingly.

## II. Children to Include in 2006-2007 Reporting

### 1. Which EEE students do I include in this year's report?

EEE programs are required to complete an Individual Child Outcomes Summary Form for **every child who receives EEE services** in your program. This is the first year that the DOE will collect entry AND exit data on the Composite Form.

- Complete **entry data for new children** who were found eligible for EEE services and entered your EEE program between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007.
- Complete **entry data and exit data for new children** who were found eligible for EEE services, entered your EEE program between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, and who have been in your program for **at least six months** and are leaving your EEE program (e.g., child is no longer eligible for special education services, family moves out of district, child will transition to kindergarten).
- The DOE will provide you with the entry data for children you reported on last spring (see the preloaded **composite child outcome summary rating form**). You must also complete **exit data for all children** who have been in your EEE program for at least six months and are **leaving your EEE program** (e.g., child is no longer eligible for special education services, family moves out of district, child will transition to Kindergarten).

### 2. The preloaded composite form sent to us from the DOE includes EEE students who will be going to kindergarten in 2007-2008. Do I report on these children as well?

Yes, **complete exit data** for all children listed on the preloaded composite form if they are leaving your EEE program (e.g., child is no longer eligible for special education services, family moves out of your district, child will transition to kindergarten for the 2007-2008 school year).

### 3. If the team feels that a child's entry rating on the preloaded composite form is inaccurate, can the rating be changed?

Yes, if you need to revise a child's entry ratings, you may correct the entry rating at this time. Draw a line through the rating provided and fill in the correct rating.

### 4. I continue to case manage EEE eligible students in kindergarten. Do I include the EEE children I now have and who will continue to serve in kindergarten in the early childhood outcome data collection?

Yes, since these children will continue to receive EEE services in kindergarten, you should provide entry ratings for them. Case management is a type of service, so the children will still be receiving EEE services and should be included.

### **III. Data Collections & Timelines**

#### **1. Are we only reporting entry data?**

No, this is the second year of Early Childhood Outcomes reporting. You will report **‘entry’ data and ‘exit’ data** this year. For further clarification, please refer to section **II.1**.

#### **2. When will we begin to report exit data?**

Exit data **is required now**. Districts are required to report ‘exit’ data in their 2006-2007 early childhood outcomes composite summary rating report that is due back to the DOE by July 15, 2007.

#### **3. Will I need to continue collecting entry data on children after June 30, 2007?**

Yes, this is an on-going reporting process. As children enter your EEE program, the team should determine the child’s level of functioning for each of the three outcomes and record those on the **individual child form**. Since Vermont is required to report annual early childhood outcomes data to OSEP through the year 2010, it will be necessary for EEE programs to report data to the DOE at least for the next five years.

#### **4. Should I mail copies of each child’s Individual Child Outcomes Summary form to the DOE?**

No, the children’s Individual Child Outcomes Summary Forms should be kept in their folders. Only send the Composite form to the DOE.

### **IV. Children Transition from Family, Infant and Toddler Programs**

#### **1. How do I report children who transition from the Family Infant Toddler Program?**

Enter the children who have transitioned into your program from FITP between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 in the Composite form. The team should have completed the entry ratings for the child on an Individual Child Outcomes Summary form within two months of the child’s entrance into EEE. Children who transition from FITP are eligible for EEE and do not need to be re-evaluated for eligibility (unless the core team deems it necessary). The entry ratings for the child should reflect his level of functioning when he entered the EEE program.

#### **2. Do FIT programs have to collect child outcomes data as well?**

Yes, in September 2006 all FITP regional host agency staff was trained in the Early Childhood Outcomes for children birth to age three. Currently, FITP programs are collecting child outcomes data.

#### **3. Will we eventually be able to use FITP exit data for EEE entry data?**

This is yet to be determined although it does make practical sense. However, we must further explore this option at the state level in collaboration with the FITP administrative staff.

## **V. Comings and Goings**

### **1. I have a child who moved into my district from a neighboring district. Do I use the sending district's entry data?**

Not at this time. Please complete a new Individual Child Outcomes Summary Form for the child who transferred into your district based on his level of functioning at the time of entry into your program. In the future, there may be the possibility of simply using another district's determination of a child's level of functioning. However, since at this point we are all just beginning to familiarize ourselves with each outcome area and the 7-point rating scale, it would be better for your team to make its own rating determination.

### **2. Do we need to complete the entry data for each new child who enters our EEE program right upon entry? It's hard for our team to determine an accurate rating of the child's functional level when we don't have a chance to really get to know them.**

No, you don't have to complete the entry data on the day the child enters your program. Your team should determine the child's level of functioning for the 3 outcome areas within two months of the child entering your EEE program.